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THE
ÁRYÁVARTA OR NORTHERN INDIA.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE MADRAS NATIVE GENTLEMEN

IN

PACHCHAPPAS HALL,

ON THE 25TH MAY 1869.

REDELIVERED BEFORE

THE VIZAGAPATAM EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

ON THE

1ST SEPTEMBER 1869.

BY

LINGAM LAKSHMAJI PANDIT.

Ridebit monitor non exauditus, ut ille,
Qui male parentem in rupes protrusit assellum
Iratus ; quis enim invitum servare laboret ?

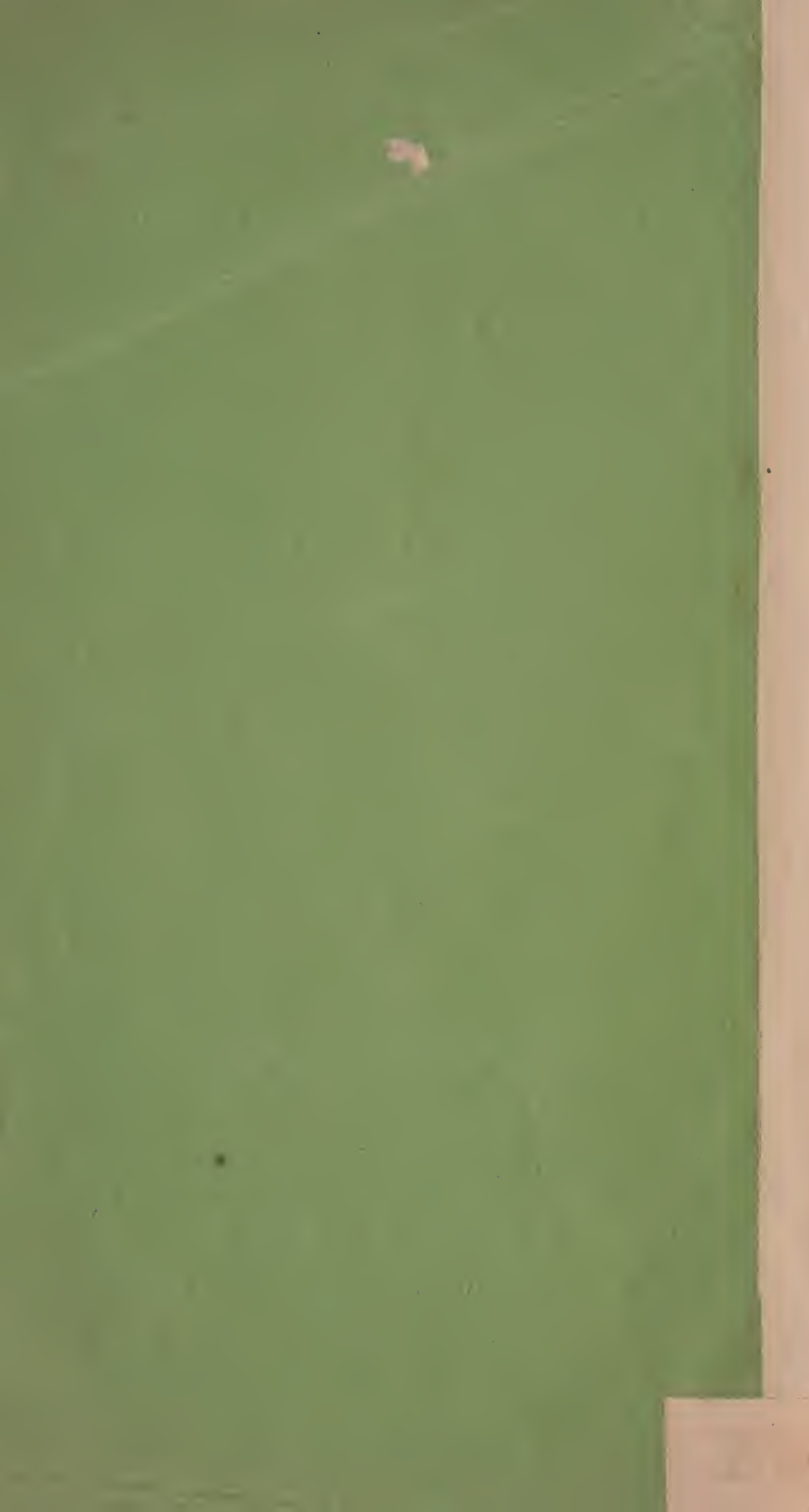
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THE ARYAVARTA

Gentlemen, those friends of mine here with whom I have had the honor of being early acquainted, having desired me to give them my impressions regarding the Aryāvarta, or Northern India ; I gladly avail myself of the thus afforded opportunity of appearing before you.

The classical name Aryāvarta has been suggested to me by our remarkably well-informed and acute intellect, Sri Venbakam Kristnamāchariyar ; and instead of defining it in my own way, I shall give its definition as given by the Sanskrit writers. Manu our patriarch defines it thus :—

Aryāvartah puṇya bhūmih radhyam Vindhya-Himalayah.

The Aryāvarta is the sacred land between the Vindhya and Himalayan ranges.

Coming down to our later classical times, we find Hema-chandrā-chārya defining the term in this wise in his Abhidhāna-chīntamaṇi :

Aryāvarta januna bhūmir jina chakryartha chakrí-ṇam. Puṇya bhú ráchára vedimadhyam Vindhya Himalayah.

The Aryāvarta is the native land of the primitive Baudhas, the primitive monarchs and the demi-gods, the sacred and sacrificial land between the Vindhya and Himálayan ranges.

Another definition is given by an ancient Grammarian in the following words :

Asamudráchcha vai púrvádásamudráchcha paschúnat,

Himavan Vindhya yor madhyamáryá vartam vidur budháh.

The learned call the tract of land between the Eastern and Western seas, and the Himálayan, and Vindhya mountains, the *Áryávarta*.

The word *Áryávarta*, is a compound of *árya*, designating the upper classes of Hindús, and *ávarta*, simply meaning a country. The first member *árya* has again a peculiar origin inasmuch as derived from the root *ar* to till it is applied to those people in primitive India, who could till the earth and produce fruit from it by manual exertion, in contradistinction to the aborigines who, destitute of this art, lived on whatever unworked nature spontaneously supplied them. Then this word *áryá* came to mean *the honorable* as the invading *Áryás* occupied a superior position in the country as all invaders generally do. Properly speaking, the country known by the same *Áryávarta* commences from the trans-Rushikulyan tracts north of Ganjam, as it is from thence that the Aryan element generally predominates.

It is true that in the Northern Sirkars and also in the south there is a large *Áryán* population ; but these *Áryás* are either Brahmans and Kshatriyas, or those who immediately derive their origin from those superior classes ; and so whenever we see a fair face in the cis-Rushi kalyan

tracts, we at once take it to be that of a Brahman or Kshatriya. It is however not so when we enter the Northern tracts of Ganjam, and all the countries further up ; for there we invariably see that even the inferior classes such as the Vaiśyas, the Súdras and the like are Áryás. But we do not say that in these parts the aborigines do not exist ; as although the invading Áryás drove them centuries ago to the neighbouring hills and mountaineous tracts, yet the lowest orders who are indeed sparse, and who have a very large quantity of Áryán blood running in their veins, belong to the original race.

To consider Áryávarta in all its bearings requires more ability and more information than I possess ; but as to do any little justice to the subject, we shall have to take it up in some order ; I propose to view Northern India in its *social, intellectual, political and religious aspects* ; and lastly we may conclude the whole with a few *general observations*.

To commence with the social aspect of the Áryávarta.

The Social aspect.

An intelligent traveller from the south will be struck by the change which meets his eyes as soon as he has passed Ichchhapúr, a small but remarkably healthy town on the main road in Ganjam ; and, after crossing the Rushikulya near Ganjam, he will imagine himself to be transported into a totally different scene. The soil is richer in proportion as it is less cultivated ; the articles of food are more savory, and somewhat cheaper ; but the people are proverbially apathetic, indolent, and uncommonly and unreasonably superstitious.

Then we have presented to our view the fine scenery of the Chilka lake formed by a storm wave from the Bay of Bengal about three centuries ago, when Chaitanya first appeared in Bengal, and taught his tenets to the people of that province and of Orissa. The Chilka lake has since its formation subserved to some extent the purposes of commerce as the produce of Northern Orissa is carried on it to the nearest marts by means of large boats. The lake itself is not without some awe-inspiring superstitions, for there are some deep places in it which are supposed to be sacred to, and haunted by, Káli, and in passing which the boatmen generally throw down their oars and resign themselves to the mercy of the dire goddess, chanting her praises. We next enter Puri, or the Pura-shottama Kshetra, as it is called, although the people of the south call it the Srijagannatha Kshetra. The influence of this stronghold of our idolatrous worship extends far and wide, for it is one of our seven bliss-giving idolatrous shrines. This shrine of Puri is supposed to be erected on a hill called the *Niladri* or *Nilaparvata*. It is not very ancient; but it has shared the fortunes of human nature; for it was for a long time during civil commotions buried under sand; the idols themselves having been carried away and buried at a distant place; until they were fabuously exhumed by a ruling prince, and the whole worship restored to its pristine grandeur.

Puri is a place of great religious resort, as pilgrims flock to it from all parts of India, particularly at certain seasons of the year, among which the *ratha-yátra* or car festival season is the chief. Some bewildered people formerly used to throw themselves under the wheels of the

moving cars of the different idols, believing that thus crushed to death they would instantly ascend to heaven. But this nefarious practice as many others of a similarly revolting nature has been put down by our English governors.

Except the pandits who are perhaps numerous, but whose influence is not salutary, the people in general are not educated in any sense of the word. They are not at all industrious, and as a necessary consequence, they are very poor, ready to be crushed by one single bad season. The Chaitanya religion predominates here as in Bengal, as established by Chaitanya himself. They speak a language called the Odhra which is wholly derived from the Sanskrit, and in which there is some literature. There is in this province a large class of Zemindars whose estates are called the tributary mehals, and some of whom are remarkably intelligent, although few have had the advantage of receiving a liberal education. The adherents of Chaitanya here, as in Bengal, called the *Prabhu-santána*, or the offspring of the Lord, live in a sort of Indian spiritual *agapemone*. Although apathetic the people are not cruel, and heinous crime is not frequent there. Each man thinks it his bounden duty to feed Brahmans, and to give them something every now and then. There are hosts of begging Brahmans who live entirely upon this sort of black mail, and who rove about in quest of it. The people sometimes give food to a traveller, if he is not a mahammadan, for whom they have the greatest hatred. The Odhras wear as a general rule coarse cloths; and their personal ornaments, except among the Brahmans and other superior classes, are made of brass and bell-metal. They use certain kinds of animal food; but to eat onions

and garlic is considered a most inexpressible sin. There is doubtless much personal beauty among the Odhras ; but their ways of dressing and decorating their persons are repulsive.

But when we go up to Bengal the picture is much more enlivening ; as together with other less potent causes, the influence of the British Indian capital of Calcutta has wrought almost wonders among the Bengalis ; but in other respect much of what we have said regarding the sister province of Orissa equally applies to the people of Bengal, living far away from all ameliorating influences. The soil of Bengal is the richest in the world ; and the people, have always had enough to live upon.

Living there in a quiet and fertile country ; the Bengalis, unlike others in India, have had no occasion for the evolution of a martial spirit among them. Bengal has always been at the same time one of the most if not the—in the Hindu sense—most civilized parts of Northern India ; and its capital Gour, now in ruins, testifies to its pristine grandeur. Here the physical appearance of man is more attractive although more delicate ; and the people are highly sensitive, sentimental, keen and comprehending. They in general live here on better food, and are better clothed and better ornamented ; but like their Odhra brothers they do not drink except in highly civilized quarters. Although savoring much of the Odhra, yet the Bengalis are not filthy in their personal habits. There is indeed more and more wealth in Bengal, and a very large class of influential Zemindars, landed proprietors and capitalists, whose presence has always been a blessing to the

country. The people here are, as a rule, more indiscriminately hospitable, more social, more liberal than anywhere else, except those of the south, who excel all others in these virtues. The Bengalis fight more generally with the tongue than with the sword; for it is a proverb among the *Hindustanis*, that the Bengali faints at the sight of a drawn sword.

With regard to learning also, the Bengalis are superior, for they have always been a set of highly intellectual people; and much of our ancient non-vedic literature owes its origin to Bengal. Their language bearing the same relationship to the Odhra, as does the Tamil to the Telugu, has been much more cultivated, and contains a far superior literature, and is admittedly sweeter than all the modern *Aryán languages* put together.

In Bengal there is no place of important religious resort; but the Ganga or Bhagirathi is a very great attraction to the people who, at stated periods, swarm to the sacred stream which confers all kinds of benefits. The temple of Kali near Calcutta is also a centre of attraction; and many resort to it; but now-a-days those fabulous human sacrifices of which we used to hear so much in our younger days are no more heard of there; nor does the goddess Kali exercise the same influence as she used to do in former days, seeing that English education and western learning of the people have estranged them from her.

The city of Calcutta rightly deserves and demands a closer study. It is by its capital that the surrounding

country is influenced either for good or for bad ; and it is remarkably so with regard to Calcutta. Originally a comparatively small town, and deriving its importance chiefly from its being one of the seats of Kali, Calcutta has, since the British assumption, continued steadily to increase and improve in every respect. It is growing every day in importance and wealth ; and the southern traveller is indeed lost in amazement on his first visit to this city of palaces. Every where signs of a high civilization and high intelligence arrest his attention. There is nothing which a cursory traveller can thoroughly observe and sufficiently appreciate. The Ganges appears to him with all its magnificent shipping of every nation and every flag as if it were a floating and majestic forest of tall trees. The strand is filled with busy people ; the government palace is a centre of attraction ; the magnificent shops around it always rivet attention ; the fort justly strikes one with wonder ; the bazars display the wealth of the city ; and the palatial mansions of the highly intellectual Bengali gentlemen deservedly produce feelings of envy in the breast of the comparatively impecunious southern visitor.

The Bengal sun is really burning ; nevertheless the breathless visitor continues his course, and next visits those fountains of information and intelligence, the printing and newspaper presses. The literary and political societies fill him with curiosity ; and the independant and anglicised Bengali Babu, talking political platitudes and discussing questions of imperial policy over brandy and beef is a social enigma to him. European and Native stand on an equal footing here ; the one does not shew that curt repulsive reservedness into which he is apt to degenerate out of the

Presidency towns; and the other does not feel himself as if in the presence of an avenging scourge; they are the closest and most intimate friends eating on the same table and drinking from the same glass; and perhaps pursuing the same object, namely money, in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases.

Then about the afternoon there is some native prince of high rank to be received by the Viceroy. There is a grand preparation at the Government palace; the surrounding shops are filled with curious spectators; for the English people and the anglicised Bengalis unaccustomed themselves to the glitter of golden dresses are really amused by the profuse display of *barbaric gold and pearl* under a rather inconvenient load of which the native princes deem it their duty to greet the Queen's representative. Just then starts up a question as to the precise number of steps which the Foreign Secretary is to go down to meet the advancing prince. Some compromise on either side hastily settles it; and always treated with consideration and kindness by the British authorities, the overjoyed and elate native prince retraces his steps accompanied by his musty ministers, one of whom is perhaps whispering to the others that if it had not been for such and such a political manœuvre on his part all would have gone amiss!

Jamalpur is a large Railway Station between Calcutta and Benares; and here we shall have fairly left our Bengali friends behind and began to see something of the muscular and robust Hindostani without any remarkable tenacity to his soil, and caring for nobody except himself,

and for nothing except his ever indispensable *hooka*. We go up by the same rail ; and as we are transported over the iron bridge on the Soan, we bless the English people for having constructed railways in India.

Patna is now visible ; and the almost gloomy and melancholy sight which the outskirts of the long celebrated Palibhotra or Patliputra present us, carry the classical traveller to the troublous times of Chandragupta, the protege of the astute and learned Brahman Chanakya who, having been insulted and treated with disrespect by the last Nanda of the Palibhotra dynasty openly vowed vengeance to the sovereign, and succeeded in overthrowing him ; and destroying the Nanda family entirely, and establishing on the vacant throne his own disciple, the son of a Súdra woman. This historical event so well described in the *Katha-saril-Ságara* of Somadeva has been graphically dramatised, as you know, by Visakhadatta in the *Madra Rakshasa*, a most terse English translation of which is to be found in Wilson's *Hindu Theatre*. The city of Patna has now lost all Hindu appearance and assumed that of a Mahammadan town, inasmuch as at present its most influential population is of that denomination. Next morning the city of Benares is in sight. Here one may take ones stand and carefully observe the surrounding scenery. We all know that Benares is the great centre of Hindu learning and Hinduism ; it is here that the best and worst types of both meet ones eyes. The whole city standing as it does on the steep western bank of the noble and sacred stream of the Ganges presents a most picturesque appearance. There are indeed lofty but very dirty looking houses and mathas along

the bank, which shew how great an importance is attached to the nearness of the sacred stream. At almost every place there is a ghatta or a flight of stairs constructed into the stream to make it convenient for the people to go down and make the usual ablutions at stated times every day. In the morning the Ganges on the western side presents a most interesting view; as we then see thousands of people, men and women of every rank and station, bathing in the stream, and saying their morning prayers. Each ghatta has its own name. The most noteworthy is the *Manikarnika* ghatta which is the most revered in-as-much as it is supposed, that bathing here certainly gives one bliss in heaven. According to the *Asa-Kumára-charita* of Dandi, the name of this ghatta derived from the daughter of a former prince of Kasi having thrown away or lost one of her jewelled ear-ornaments in the stream here. Then there is the open *Dasavamedha* ghatta where a former sovereign is said to have performed ten horse sacrifices; and the next best is the *Kedara*-ghatta, where dwells an emblem of Siva known by the name of *Kedaresvara*. There are no less than fifteen hundred Hindu temples at Benares. The chief worship is that of Siva. The city as it now stands, is not older than perhaps two hundred years, when the Maharattas rebuilt it after the Mahammadan perturbations. That monocrat Aurungzib had always his religious enthusiasm and intolerance directed against this centre of Hinduism. Professor Edward Hall in a recent monograph has very pertinent remarks on the origin of the name of Benares; but I am inclined to think it is a Hindustani corruption of the Sanskrit word *Varánasi*, designating the site between the two parts of the Ganges known as the *Varuna*

and *Asi* ; because that which stands between the two branches of the sacred stream is said to be Benares proper a circumstance which also accounts for the unwillingness of the people there to extend the limits of the City either way further, as if they do so they will be going to the extreme of mixing the holy with the unholy ground. The city, as may naturally be expected under such circumstances is very crowded ; although it does not contain more than 1,75,000 human beings ; the houses being heaped as it were upon each other making it almost inconvenient for one accustomed to purer air to live comfortably at Benares. Then it is called the *Ananda-vana*, or Siva's recreation garden ; for here no mortal can sin, at least the consequences of his sins here do not overtake him. He can be as free and as unrestricted as possible, *physically* and *morally*, but for that obnoxious modern institution called *the Police* which interferes with human nature even in a holy place like Benares. Another of the epithets of Benares is *Brahmanāla* which I should take to mean nothing more than a covered sewer, for the whole city proper stands on a number of covered or underground sewers into which is discharged all the rubbish and night-soil. A third epithet is *Mahāsmasūna*, or the great burning ground ; for day and night one always sees some human corps being burnt at the *Manikarnika Ghatta*. The best part of the population are the Maharatta Brahmans who are very respectable, very intelligent and some really learned. Then come the Mahajans or the moneyed trading classes, who are also very respectable, but who are generally innocent of learning. Then there are the Kayasthas a race of hereditary scribes originally descending from a Kshatranya father and Súdra mother. A large number of Bengalis, many of whom

are very intelligent and very respectable, have made Benares, the place of their permanent residence. The city also abounds with a number rajalings, representatives of broken dynasties, political prisoners, and rich visitors who find it very difficult to wean themselves from its many attractions. There is a very large intermixture of all-consuming Muhammadans. The rest is a sort of floating population, without any established status ; and to this may be added the hosts of pennyless pilgrims who resort to the holy city from every part of India, and who finding an easy livelihood here are tempted to remain away.

The almost daily *melas* or festive meetings and concourses at Benares, are a chief attraction. The city being full of Hindu pagodas there is some festival going on at some of them every day ; and it is really a sight to see large numbers of handsome, well-dressed and superbly decorated Hindu ladies going on in batches of tens and twenties on foot to the temples. Of course the elite of the opposite sex is to be found sauntering at these *melas*.

Then there are several centres of learning where self-made but really learned professors are propounding the knotty points in the Sanskrit Grammar, Sanskrit Logic, and teaching the Sanskrit classics to a number of gratuitous pupils. The chief *Puranas* are daily recited in some of the chief temples and explained or interpreted to a host of Hindu females chiefly widows ; and the *Vyāsaji* for such is the professional name of the Puranic reciter receives some small presents from his fair audience.

It is at Benares that we see the lordly looking and well-formed Hindustanis sleek with the rich food which is here had cheaper and more abundantly than elsewhere. The people of this part of India as well as of the still upper provinces are as a rule handsome. The superior nature of the food upon which they live here, and the purer air and bracing atmosphere of these parts are doubtless the causes of the superior physical appearance of man here. Every where the country presents a most inviting appearance. The people are somewhat indifferent to the people of the south, whom they do not regard with any sense of respect ; although now and then they are inclined to be hospitable to the veda-chanting Brahmans from the banks of the Kistna and Godavari. The country seems to be abundantly rich ; and the upper classes are as a general rule well-to-do people. Almost every third respectable man you meet with is a landed proprietor, a Zemin-dar, a Jaghirdar, a wealthy Mahajun, or a banker. They are as a rule well dressed and well behaved ; and they speak a language called the Hindí which derived from the Sanskrit and containing no literature properly so called of its own, has a large mixture of Arabic and Persian words. The people in these parts are not blindly and grossly superstitious ; yet they generally observe every Hindu ceremony.

Again the upper and well-to-do classes, not being entirely dependent on Govt. service for living, do not come frequently into contact with the European gentlemen who whenever they meet them treat them with consideration and respect. But although comparatively independent and therefore to a certain extent commanding respect, the Hindustanians are very much afraid of the Europeans.

The country is thickly dotted with native princes, politically more or less independent ; and as in politically independent tracts the will of the regnant prince is generally the law, and as incessant and daring intrigue is frequently successful, the people of the contiguous British provinces are apt to degenerate into lawless habits, and frequently adopt lawless courses.

Our attention is then drawn to Cawnpúr more celebrated since the mutiny of 1857. The sacred garden and the still more sacred well into which the Christian victims of the cruel Nana were thrown inspire one with religious awe. The lofty and majestic figure of the Angel of hope which is placed over the closed well indeed adds to the sacredness of the already sacred and still grove.

Lucknow which next comes in sight is full of nice buildings, full of dancing girls and dancing boys, full of musicians, fluters, fifers, full of professional singers, full of ballad makers, full of idle saunterers, and full of people with love tales on their lips. Beyond this there is hardly any thing more that deserves notice here, unless it be the rising English institutions, which certainly promise to regenerate the province ere long. The growing prosperity of the people in general, and the peace which reigns throughout the province attest to the magic of the English rule which has in so short a time reduced one of the most troublous parts of India to peaceful order.

There are some places of minor importance on our way up ; but our attention will chiefly be fixed and concentrated on the two imperial cities of Delhi and Agra.

As you enter Delhi you are at once struck by its still lurking imperial grandeur. The Silinghar or the old fort, the Lal Killa or the red fort, the Chandini chauk, the Jumma masjid, the Kutub, and a hundred other objects fully occupy us. The people even of the lowest orders use the language of a polished but licentious court. The behaviour of the people in general is dignified, and their personal appearance commanding.

As we enter the Lal-killa or the new fort built with red stone we are again struck by the remains of its former magnificence. There is the Divan Khas or the private audience hall on which is written in golden characters this inscription :—

“ If there be a heaven on earth it is this, it is this, it is this ! ”

Then we see the Divan Am or the public audience hall ; where we are shewn the different standing places,—for nobody dared to sit down in the imperial presence—which each of the satellites of Jayapur, Udayapúr, and others of similar rank and position occupied ; and then we are led to the throne seat with an aperture on the back of it, through which it is said that the celebrated and beautiful Núr Jehan, light of the world, the favorite and constant consort of the emperor Jehangir, thrust her delicate hand and touched her imperial lover's back, as without it resting on him and animating him as it were, he could neither transact public business nor appear on any public occasion ! The Hammam khana or the imperial bath, and the Moti-masjud also require our attention.

At Agra the fort with its fine buildings, the Taj-mahal especially, and the immense plain now used as a parade ground occupy us. Everything in the fort shews the luxurious sensuality of the Mogul Emperors. The mosque is a really superb building and requires close study. Then there is a marbled chess-board-floor on which it is said that the emperors used well-dressed fine looking young girls in the place of chess-pieces.

The Taj-mahal is indeed the wonder of the world. The history of that surpassing beauty Bano Begam, afterwards Taj, in whose honor the structure was built is told by a hundred bards ; and her pictures so finely done at Delhi and Agra, find a ready sale at fabulous prices. That majestic building is an attraction in all its parts ; and one is lost in imagination in contemplating its unrivalled grandeur. You find the leading portions of the Khoran inscribed on the marble walls of this wonderful building by means of letter-shaped precious stones impressed therein imbedded.

From Delhi further up the scene never changes, except that the stamp of Mahammadanism is every where more and more prominently visible.

You see Panipat so often the scene of pitched battles which used to decide the fate of India ; and you see Karnaul an almost desolate place. With scarcely anything to fix our attention further, we are further carried to the foot of the cloud-capped mountains, the lofty and majestic Himalayas : and near Kalka there is a beautiful garden called the Pinjour valley with its water jets constantly playing and with many kinds of fruit and flower trees.

Here first we come in contact with a people whose features have somewhat of the Mongolian or Chinese stamp on them. Hinduism is almost forgotten here. At Kalka you ascend the hills. The Himalayan scenery is indeed very striking. When you are higher up you will find it raining and thundering under your feet ; and thus you enter that really earthly Paradise, Simla, or more properly the Syámala-Kshetra from the goddess Syámala or Kali residing on one of the nearest peaks. Here there is a profusion of the Parvateyas or hillmen not at all to be compared to our Todas, Bhils, Kondhs and Savaras, but really a fine set of people. Here we also meet with Kashmerians renowned for their personal beauty.

Wherever there are Hindus, there the same Hindu customs and manners prevail. India is the country of the Hindus ; and we must be prepared to find the same monotony every where from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas with but slight differences arising from the people of the different tracts following the different codes of our different patriarchs. The same vedas, the same philosophical writings, the same smritis or traditions, and the same puranas predominate from one end to the other. It is only the later commentators who have interpreted the different texts each in his own way that have exercised a sort of moral and intellectual tyranny over us. The Hindus as you all know occupy the foremost place among the ancient nations. We are the first civilized people in the world. We have been reckoned as superior even to the ancient Greeks and Romans, the most civilized of all the civilized nations. We have always held a commanding position in an intellectual point of view.

The intellectual aspect.

The ancient travellers of China, Greece, and Rome attest to our pristine grandeur and importance. The Alexandrian writers, the early Romans, and the Chinese visitors speak in high terms of ourselves, our learning, and our country. It is from us that the ancient Greece, the ancient Rome, and the pre-Muhammedan Arabia seem to have derived the rudiments of their knowledge as far as the sciences and arts are concerned. There is no doubt that the seed of learning was imported into other early nations from our soil. You all know that the decimal system is derived from the Hindus who have always used a decimal notation. Our Pancha-tantra, our Suka-sapta-sati, our Brihat Katha, and similar works form the ground work from which all ancient nations seem to have derived a knowledge of fable-writing subserving the purposes of moral instruction. Our astronomy also was in great repute among the ancient nations.

The brahmans are the first and foremost people among the Hindus ; the intellectual palm has always been theirs. There has not been a similar race of self-denying and highly intellectual and highly cultivated people among any other nations on the face of the earth. The brahamanical intellect has been cultivated almost from the beginning of the world ; for the brahmans represent the first and last best Aryans. It is they that have been the authors and preservers of all Aryan learning. The brahmans have always held the foremost rank in India. Early they were the rulers of our land ; latterly devoting themselves exclusively to intellectual and spiritual pursuits they severed themselves from worldly cares, resigning the regal power to the second class, the Kshatriyas ; but at the same time

taking care to maintain their own intellectual and spiritual superiority and worldly precedence, and looking upon the thence forward ruling class as their inferiors in every respect. The sacredness attached to the name of brahman has always been proverbial. The word *Abrahmanyam*, unbrahmanical uttered as a word of appeal means *anarchy*, showing that what is not fit for brahmans is not worth having, or is to be forthwith avoided. Unattended, undecorated, unassuming and simple the brahman has always commanded high consideration and high reverence. His awe-inspiring presence has always cowed the most unscrupulous tyrant in India. Seeing that in later times the kshatryas degenerated into mere sensualists, the brahmans came to their help. Then a rule was enacted that none but brahmans should fill the place of minister to a Hindu sovereign. So we find not only from our own records but also from the writings of Magasthenes, a Grecian ambassador to the Court of Chandragupta of Pataliputra or Patna, that the best and foremost Sanskrit scholars and writers such as Katyana, Amarasinha, Rakshasa, Chanakya and others were successively ministers of the most powerful and long lasting Palibhotra dynasty. Even during the Mahammadan occupation of our country, the brahmans although somewhat religiously persecuted were placed in leading administrative posts. Who has not read of the great Akbar's, great financial minister Todar Mall? Who does not know the administration of Purnayya of Mysore? Nor have the English despised the brahmans; for, for a long time it was a rule among the early English administrators that brahmans alone should occupy the foremost places next to themselves in the administration of our country. I remember Mr. Onslaw, a former Gover-

nor's Agent in Ganjam seriously remarking that "if there were no brahmans there could be no Kacheri."

Our truly monstrous Sanskrit literature, a great part of which has been hopelessly lost, is the reflex of our manners and customs ; as is the case with the literature of every other nation ancient or modern. But this difference strikes every well-meaning and impartial inquirer in our present condition. The European nations have been adapting themselves and theirs to the advancing intelligence of modern times ; while the Asiatic people, and among them, more especially we Hindus appear not to have done so ; but gentlemen, in this respect we have our own excuse ; for ever since the Mahammadan invasion, the people of India have never enjoyed political rest and political freedom. Our ancient monarchies swept away, and with them all unity of action for the moral and intellectual improvement of the people, we cannot wonder that we have remained stationary where we were a thousand years ago. But the very political changes that we have been subjected to from time to time have in themselves done us some good, as if we had remained close, against every other nation, we should never have been brought into contact with contrary influences ; we should have revolved and evolved the same things ; and after all we should not have advanced a step further. Our literature shews that our ancestors had about the time of Mahammadan perturbations perfected in their own way their sciences and arts, that they had made all the discoveries and inventions which they were capable of doing, and that about the times we are alluding to, they had pretty nearly set themselves to work upon the materials they had then

collected. They believed that nothing more was ever possible to be known or discovered in nature, a state of feeling which is so graphically described in the *Novum Organum* in the following words :—

Verum non satis illis est, de se confiteri, sed quid sibi ipsis aut magistris suis incognitum aut intactum fuerit, id extra terminos possibilis ponunt ; et tanquam arte cognitu aut factu impossibile pronuntiant : summa superbia et invidia suorum inventorum infirmitatem in naturae ipsius calumniam et aliorum omnium desperationem vertentes. Not only the blind reverence of our ancestors to the still more ancestral vedas ; but also their admiration and satisfaction at what had been then known was another potent cause of their stagnation, so far as the progress of sciences and arts was concerned ; and here also we find ourselves supported by the immortal Bacon who says further on :—*Neque solum admiratio antequitatis auctoritatis et consensus, hominum industriam in iis, quae jam inventa sunt, acquiescere compulit ; verum etiam operum ipsorum admiratio, quorum copia jampridem facta est humano generi.*

Even from the enterprising Mahammadans who indeed proved our scourges we have learned many things which have increased our material comforts.

The later education and mental culture of the upper classes degenerated into learning merely the outward superstitious rites which our Puranic religion so vigorously enforces.

Our forefathers in the later times paid no attention to

their vernaculars through which alone they could reach the masses.

The barriers between class and class and the feelings about them are so strong that so long as they remain, as they have hitherto remained, without any shew of reason and contrary to our own scriptures, we can never become happy. One instance which has fallen under my own observation will show to what unreasonable and ridiculous extent this feeling is carried. A brahman of the usual education in the employ of a D. P. W. officer was ordered to have a quantity of charcoal prepared in a neighbouring jungle during the hot month of May. He went into a jungle some fifteen miles away from his place ; but finding that there was only one well from which the people of the lower castes were drawing their water, he religiously avoided touching it, and at the same time exposing himself to the burning sun, fell down about midday speechless and insensible. The coolies whom he had employed were all pariahs ; but seeing that the holy brahman was perishing, they drew out the life-giving water from the same well and poured it into his month ; he of course drank it. They then soaked him well in water, and then carried him to his own town, where when the story was told it excited both laughter and pity.

The brahmans when they learn anything next to the to-them-unintelligible vedas learn the Sanskrit grammar and Sanskrit logic. None dare think of learning both completely. They consider that when they have mastered either the Sanskrit grammar, or simply the formal logic, they have acquired all the learning in the world ; and instead of paying any attention to the general Sanskrit liter-

ature they begin to solve every thing in their own conceited manner. A story is told of a Sanskrit grammarian, who, when about to go to a neighbouring village through an intervening forest, asked his friends whether there was any fear on the road; and when he was told that the intervening forest was infested by a *vyághra* or tiger, an animal of which he had no conception whatever, he thought it beneath himself to ask them what the word meant and began to analyze it thus:—The word *vyághra* is composed of the prepositions *vi* and *á* both meaning *much* and the root *ghrá* which means *to smell*. So it must mean something that smells a little too much; and it is not proper to expect that any fear will come out of anything that smells a little too much. Thus satisfied he proceeded, and was of course overtaken and eaten up by the hungered tiger which had little respect for the holy brahman.

A logician of the same order after having completed his so-called studies at some well-known place of learning, returned to his father's-in-law house; where on his first appearance his brothers-in-law in order to test how acute a logician he was, jocosely told him that his wife had become a widow, and ostentatiously began to weep bitterly. The bewildered logician also took it much to heart and began to weep too. The father-in-law and the bystanders remarked to him that it was impossible that his wife should become a widow while he was yet living. "Why, gentlemen," he turns round and tells them, "why can not my wife become a widow during my life time? That is logically wrong; you see my mother has become a widow during my life time, my sister has become a widow during my life time, and by the same analogy my wife can become a widow during my life time."

Such, gentlemen, is the learning which the generality of our present pandits, and present spiritual guides are possessed of. Then woe for us if we suffer ourselves to be led away by them. Of course there are very superior and really learned men, but unless their learning is sifted by the light of the western philosophy, and unless they suffer their dogmas to be examined by the Baconian principles, instead of becoming useful or fruitful either to themselves or to their neighbours, they turn out to be real nuisances. At Benares there are very superior pandits, such men as Bapu Deva Sastri and others who having added the purifying western learning to their extensive Sanskrit knowledge are indeed bright examples of the contrary kind; but their number is as yet too small and their influence, if ever they dare to exert it, is naturally unfelt. Beyond Benares even this learning has disappeared; but the people of the upper tracts have happily betaken themselves to the more practical learning of the Arabians and Persians; and with the Arabic and Persian they enrich their vernaculars. They are thus more fitted for the discharge of the duties of every day life. At Kurukshetra which is one of our great holy places, and at which there are numbers of beggarly brahmans, I was struck by the absence of any vestige of *any learning whatever*. At Calcutta the case is quite different. There it is highly gratifying to see many a reformer beginning with the celebrated Pandit Isvara Chandra Sarma Vidya Sagar, and many an antiquarian beginning with Babu Rajendralal Mittra, the ornament of the Bengal Asiatic Society. The Calcutta University has given an impetus to Anglo-Sanskrit learning; and the really learned Pandit Tarnath Tarka Vachaspati's elementary works are already

making the study of our holy and classical language a comparatively easy task. We want a body of Anglo-Sanskrit scholars, because it is Anglo-Sanskrit learning that will subvert our existing prejudices ; and it is only by its means that India will be ameliorated and regenerated.

The whole of Telingana, as well as all the tracts where the brahmans of the Pancha Dravida order prevail, as also the province of Orissa is infested by infant marriages, although such a rite is not imperative on us. In Bengal and in the upper provinces, they do not confine themselves to infant marriages. The example of the higher classes is implicitly followed by the lower orders in this as in every other respect. In some parts the little girls are regularly sold and bought ; while in others husbands are sold and bought as in the case of Kulins in Bengal, where happily this abominable practice is in its wane.

In the upper provinces where the husband buying exists to a fearful extent, the consequence is that female infanticide is very generally practiced. Then the most crying evil of evils is the supposed prohibition of widow re-marriages in the upper classes throughout the length and breadth of India. There is not only direct sanction in our scriptures for such re-marriages, but the custom prevailed among our ancestors. In some unaccountable manner, perhaps owing to the pernicious influence of our precious pandits who have always wanted widows for domestic purposes ; this salutary practice has fallen into disuse among *the well-to-do-classes* ; and the consequence is that the whole of India is groaning under a moral curse. There

is as yet one bright example, and that is of Pandit Isvara Chandra-Sarma-Vidya Sagar, the reformer of Bengal, who has not only successfully proved that there is direct sanction for the re-marriage of Hindu widows, not only written much on the subject, not only constantly and consistently advocated the revival of the practice, not only faced all sorts of obloquy for having thus become a renegade, but has also, be it said to his immortal glory, been the cause and instrument of the celebration of more than fifty widow remarriages. Yet let it be remembered that the celebrated reformer is no Brahmo, no Christian, but a pure and staunch and rigid Hindu.

Politically ancient India was never under a single monarch; and the existence of countries bearing different names independently of other historical residence to be found in our ancient Sanskrit literature proves this fact. Enervated by unrestricted luxury and licensed sensuality the Hindu princes gave way one by one to the invading Mahammadans; but no conquerors can or need destroy the unopposing dependent or tributary princes, and the still more dependent aristocracy of the land, who were often employed by the Mahammadan emperors as the instruments of establishing and consolidating their own power in the distant parts of India. But there were the quasi-independent states of the Rajasthan, who were so near the seat of imperial power that it is a wonder that they have remained intact as it were; although the means which they employed for the purpose of securing themselves and theirs were not extraordinary. They did not oppose force to force; but seeing that the early Mogal emperors courted

matrimonial alliances with them, they readily and gladly availed themselves of this expedient of avoiding the otherwise imminent self-destruction, by offering their daughters and sisters to the Mogals, who thus became their sons-in-law and their brothers-in-law. Thus the whole of the Rajasthan having been spared and saved, the Mogals looked upon the leading Hindu princes of that province as their natural allies and confederates, in political rank next to themselves alone. Thus too their relatives, and the relatives of their relatives, who were petty princes either in their neighbourhood or in distant tracts were also saved. The Zanana influences were then as now always great ; and the Rajaputra ladies were able now and then to make their dependants, favorite brahmans, and family priests, landed nobles. So we see many landed proprietors even in the neighbourhood of the seat of Mogal Government. All these were treated with a certain amount of respect which they have, with few exceptions, maintained even up to our times.

Latterly sprung up the policy of Subadarships ; and under each of the Subadars again we always find a number of dependent Zamindars and Talukdars, sometimes belonging to the soil and sometimes imported and placed in their stead as mere renters and farmers of the revenue, which it was then very difficult and tedious to collect. To this circumstance, to the existence of many landed lords, and to the law of primogeniture which has always been in force among them, is chiefly owing the wealth of these provinces, where although many of the landed proprietors themselves are impecunious, there are more capitalists and moneyed men than any where else.

In the independent and quasi-independent states the

will of the regnant prince is generally the law of the land ; and there being little or no honesty generally among the ministers, the people suffer grievously ; but with all this which the British government tolerates, instead of insisting on the introduction of their own codes and other concurrent reforms, which would at once work a change for the better the native princes, landed proprietors and landed lords are a blessing to the country. It is true that if these middle-men did not exist the prosperity of the country would be more levelled and more equalized among the people ; but then the people would be fit for no noble purpose. The theory of modern government is, as you all know, not only to keep the people in contented ignorance ; it is at the same time the duty as it were of the rulers of a country to raise the intellectual status of their subjects. The more you raise the people from their brute ignorance, the more will be the means of multiplying their material prosperity ; because that the accumulated wisdom of a people will produce more wealth and more material comfort we have many an instance in modern times. There will always remain a substratum of people in gross ignorance, but that is no reason that their numbers should increase instead of decreasing.

We know that intellectual superiority always minimizes manual labour, and that the more a people are intellectually advanced, the more will be the need for the employment of machinery which is undoubtedly capable of achieving more than unassisted *hands*. Thus, I see more cogent reasons for multiplying the race of landed aristocracy than for multiplying the lower orders to live in contented ignorance.

Sentimental people point with a shudder to the already existing native states, and ask us whether any good is likely to come from the caprices of silken fools and the outlawry of purpled greatness. But there is nothing to prevent us from removing all causes of the abuse of power. If the British Government suggests and insists on the adoption of a better system of administration into the native states, if it makes it a rule that the native princes should receive a good English education before they are permitted to sit at the head of their affairs, and if the British officers watch and direct their proceedings with less scrupulousness, all that is desirable will have been done. We need only look at some of the great states of Rajasthan in the present famine and we shall be convinced of what British political wisdom is capable of doing as it has done, in inducing the native princes there to introduce into their administrations such reforms as are calculated to prove lasting blessings to the people.

Coming to the masses themselves we are every where struck by their contentment. The codes have worked a revolution ; the law of limitation and the registration acts have smothered and swept away a very great source of crime and discontent. The multiplication of judicial courts, the uniform postage, the railways and the electric telegraph have every where been a real blessing to the people. Lawless habits are getting less and less ; organized bands for illicit and illegal purposes have every where almost disappeared ; and security of person and security of property reign universally.

Our religion and our spiritual ideas are a subject to
 Religious aspect. which no justice can be done in the short

space which we have now left to ourselves. There is no doubt whatever that a thorough expurgation and a radical reform should take place ; and that is not to be expected from the race of pandits whom we have now got. It is only I repeat, from a sufficiently large body of Anglo-Sanskrit scholars devoting themselves to the examination of our scriptures that the expected radical reforms will emanate.

Our vedas are the wonder of the world. No nation has more early or more ancient records. It is professedly for the illustration and illucidation of the vedas that the greater portion of our literature is devoted ; but the present examination of the vedas in their existing state shews that they do not tend so much to throw light upon our present religion and spiritual ideas, as to record the sayings and doings of our primitive ancestors ; although all the would-be reformers should as a starting point make themselves acquainted with these the most ancient records in the world. But that the knowledge of our vedic ancestors was limited and that therefore the wisdom which they teach is not that which can be received and accepted by us living in times of advanced intelligence and more correct ideas cannot but be admitted by all well meaning, unbiassed and intelligent men. Our knowledge of the world and our experience handed down to us from age to age are very superior to what our ancestors possessed ; and unless we acknowledge our vedic authors to be inspired, we shall not be justified in accepting their teachings as infallible ; especially as we cannot conceal from ourselves the fact that those teachings are generally repugnant to cultivated reason. Whether the vedas are the production of inspired authors should be tested by the light of Baconian philo-

sophy, that philosophy to which Lord Macauley attributes all the good in post-Elizabeth Europe.

Coming down to later times, we have the upanishads which are the basis of our theology, and which demand a careful scrutiny ; but these should be studied together with the *Darśanas* to which exactly applies the following remark in Lord Bacon's *Novum Organum* :—

At primi et antiquissimi veritatis inquisitores, meliore fide et fato, cognitionem illam, quam ex rerum contemplatione decerpere, et in usum recondere statuebant, in aphorismos, sive breves, easdemque sparsas, nec methodo revinctos sententias, conjicere solebant ; neque se artem universam complecti simulabant, aut profitebantur. At eo quo nunc resagitur modo, minime mirum est, si homines in iis ulteriora non quaerant, quæ pro perfectis et numeris suis jam pridem absolutis traduntur.

Our forefathers trying to fuse into unision the purely spiritual views of our primitive rishis or sages and the materialistic conceptions of the Puranic authors have done us the greatest possible amount of mischief.

Illud in his rebus vereor, ne forte rearis
Impia te rationis inire elementa viam que
Ingredi sceleris ; quod contra saepius illa
Religio peperit scelerosa atque impia facta.

Lucretius.

It is this effort of our later spiritual guides to which we owe the numerous religious sects existing not only in the *Āryāvarta*, but throughout the rest of India ; and

which has given rise to Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Chaitanya and others of minor importance, each in his way trying to reconcile the Aupanishada precepts with the Puranic teachings. Then again departing from the original school founded by the well-known Rajah Rama Mohun Roy, the present Brahmos have founded for themselves a sort of eclectic religion which owes a great deal to Christian Theology ; but their teachings and their ritual have as yet failed to attract any large number of intelligent men. Instead of following a plan similar to that which we have sketched out, and which alone will convince the Hindus of the truth or otherwise of their present religious tenets, the Brahmos have gone and built up a new and seemingly independent religion ; and it remains to be seen what success they will be ultimately crowned with when our school will have been fairly formed.

Let us now descend to a more congenial atmosphere.

General observations. I fear I have already exhausted your patience ; and the Procrustian limits of time allowed for an address of this kind do not allow me to dilate further. I shall however close with a few remarks of a general description.

What has been now said generally refers to the Aryāvarta ; but as I have already remarked India and its people should always be looked upon as a whole, as the physical and social differences are merely climatic and sectarian and do not affect us further.

The present researches into the interesting science of language has established different linguistic families,

from which it is deducible that the different races of mankind must have had different patriarchs ; and attempts are also being made to prove the common identity of the whole human race by the production of linguistic evidence. As man where-ever and however formed, whether in the frigid or torrid zone, whether as civilized or barbarous, his natural wants and desires are all identical, it follows that his language must have originally been one and the same. Again the identity of human language being thus established, it directly establishes the identity of human race. There can be no doubt whatever as to the common language of man being that from which the primitive Sanskrit was wrought out ; and the most remarkable verbal and inflectional coincidences which strike us in many of the old inflectional languages cannot be attributed to chance. As a practical illustration of this fact I shall read out to you some short sentences which I have composed in Sanskrit and Latin, which are in every respect identical and mean the same thing in both languages.

In Sanskrit the equivalent expression for “ I have a house ” is :—

Asti mahyam dháma.

In Latin the same is :—

Est mihi domus.

For “ My father and mother are dead ” You say in Sanskrit:—

Pita máta mama mritau.

In Latin the same is :—

Pater, mater meí mortui.

For “ I have got three brothers ” the Sanskrit is:—

Brataro mama trayah santi.

In Latin you say the same :—

Fratres mei tres sunt.

For “ My eye does not espy the ship in the sea ” the Sanskrit is :—

Na pasyati mama akshi navam varini tisthantim.

The same in Latin is :—

Non specit mei oculus navem mari sthantem.

For “ Hero’s go to the abode of the sun,” we say in Sanskrit :—

Vira sūryasya locum prayānti

The same in Latin is :—

Viri solis locum proeunt.

So you see what a close resemblance there is between the two oldest cultivated inflectional languages. The establishment of the identity of the human race by means of the science of language is a blessing, especially to us who are governed by a foreign nation, inasmuch as it has established the idea, that we and the Europeans are members of the same brotherhood ; and this idea and the feelings to which it has given rise in every good heart have been productive of immense political good to us.

The education which we are receiving although not altogether that which our circumstances require we should receive, is already working wonders. Where-ever English education has prevailed, it has generally levelled the most obnoxious of our prejudices which are as yet not replaced by any thing better as our present mental culture is not probably equal to that. Our young men as soon they emerge from their colleges, consider their education as

complete* and never generally take a book again into their hands in after-life. But we have many and honorable exceptions in our pre-university men, our Ramiengars, our Ranganatha Sastris, our Muttusvami Ayyars, our Seshayyars, and others who are held in high esteem, and whose advancement in life shews how readily our rulers are willing to utilize the indigenous material for administrative and political purposes.

The future is full of hope to us. Every day our Governors are adopting a more and more liberal policy towards India and its millions ; and as we advance intellectually the highest prizes that are to be had in worldly preferment will fall within our reach. You all know what the Duke of Argyll, the present Secretary of State for India is at this moment doing for us.

But, gentlemen, we know that Government service is not the only means for worldly advancement. There are a thousand other openings ; and the non-official English gentlemen who make princely fortunes under very noses, ought to open our eyes to what can be done in other directions. But with all this the thorough amelioration and regeneration of India cannot be effected until we can aspire higher than to Rupees, annas and pice, until Hindu or Native Engineers can build steamers in India, until we are capable of navigating our own vessels on the same scientific principles as the European captains and pilots do, until we can construct the telegraphic wire for ourselves, until we can make private rail-roads to connect place with

* No young man's scholastic education is to be deemed complete before he has mastered Mill's two great works, the Political Economy and the Logic. All classical students should study Bacon's *Novum Organum* in Latin.

place, until we can make some land conveyance which not requiring animal power for its locomotion will economize time and labor, until better agricultural implements are made with reference to the present wants of the country and agriculture itself is carried on scientifically.

Many of our present wants escape our attention in our hot pursuit of some preferment. We do not attend even to our most necessary physical comforts. We have read how by means of scientific wells, good drinking water was supplied by the English Engineers to the Abyssinian force : we know that in many places in India good drinking water is scarce. Have we directed our attention to this ? In many places in the mofussil the paddy fields on the banks of a full nalla are parched for want of an adequate supply of water. The nulla is no doubt very deep, and the water cannot be utilized by means of canals ; but is there no other mode of temporarily making use of the flowing stream ? Our most pressing want is a self-moving pankha and yet we have no native mechanic who can supply this want. Can we explain the anomaly of our using European watches and time-pieces, in which *our day* begins at *six o'clock* in the morning and ends at *six o'clock* in the evening, instead of *beginning at one* and *ending at twelve* ? The fact is we do not as yet find ourselves at leisure to turn our attention to these simple wants and conveniences and comforts.

I feel very much gratified by the patient attention which you have been kind enough to accord to this perhaps tedious address. I must confess that Madras and its rising native gentlemen have made a very favorable impression on my mind, an impression which I hope will

last to the end of my days. The people in general are very hospitable, very kind, very social and very generous ; and I shall return home with grateful feelings.

FINIS.



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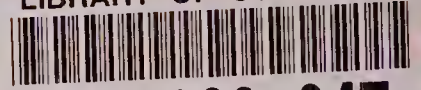


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